

UNITED STATES

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STATE WATERFOWL HUNTING SEASONS APPROVED BY INTERIOR DEPARTMENT

State game and fish department recommendations on dates for opening and closing the 1965-66 duck and goose hunting seasons have been approved by the Department of the Interior, Secretary Stewart L. Udall announced today.

The complete waterfowl hunting regulations for the 1965-66 season are being published in the Federal Register. States will make public announcement of their respective opening dates, season lengths, and bag limits.

The outside dates within which States could select their seasons, bag limit options, and make other special regulations, were given in "frameworks" recently announced by Secretary Udall. These frameworks were based on aerial and ground surveys of waterfowl nesting areas by the Department's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife. These statistically designed surveys are the most intensive and extensive of any in the world, the Bureau said.

Secretary Udall said the Bureau's surveys found much improved water conditions on the northern prairie nesting areas, but the breeding stock was too low to take full advantage of the situation. He said fall flights comparable to 1964 are expected in the three eastern flyways with a slight decrease in the Pacific Flyway.

Secretary Udall expressed particular concern about mallard and pintail populations. He said the surveys showed the breeding populations of these ducks to be the lowest ever recorded.

In general, the regulations this year are similar to last year's, but added restrictions have been placed on mallards and pintails in an attempt to increase the numbers of these birds which will return to the breeding grounds in 1966.

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